

TALK GIVEN AT THE OPENING
CEREMONY OF THE
DALLAS BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION

*"It is difficult to obtain human life,
and even more so to encounter,
understand, and learn from the
Buddha's Teachings."*

“How fortunate we are to enjoy a happy life! How lucky we are to be able to hear the great Teachings! The most precious of all is to have encountered the direct, complete, and wondrous teachings of the Pure Land School.

The peace and happiness which has fulfilled my life all sprang forth from practicing of the Pure Land Teachings. Ever since I, Chin Kung, began studying the Buddha's Teachings, not a single day

passed by in which I forget the kindness shown to me by my teachers. The only way to express my sincere gratitude is to fully dedicate my time and energy into sharing the Teachings with Society. As I enter old age, I feel an urgent need to carry out my responsibility of solely promoting and cultivating the Pure Land Teachings. Today, I would like to share with everyone the same peace and happiness I have gained through the Teachings in this short introductory speech. The six passages below are a compilement of the main points summarized from the entire Buddhist Treasury:

1. Buddhism is the most pro-found and whole-some educa-tion directed by the Buddha towards all people.

2. The content in Shakyamuni Buddha's forty-nine years of teachings describes the true face of life and the universe. Life refers to oneself; universe refers to our living environment. The Teachings directly relate to our own lives and surroundings.

3. Those who possess a complete and proper understanding of life and the universe are called Buddhas or Bodhisattvas. Those who lack the understanding are namely 'worldly people'.

4. Cultivation is changing the way we think,

speak, and act toward people and matters from an erroneous way to a proper way.

5. The guideline for cultivation is understanding, proper views, and purity. True understanding is without delusion, proper view is without deviation, and purity is without defilement. This can be achieved by practicing the Three Learnings of self discipline, concentration, and wisdom.

6. The foundation of cultivation and study are the Three Basic Conditions. When in-

teracting with people, accord with the Six Harmonies, and when dealing with society, practice the Six Principles. Follow the lessons taught by Universal Worthy Bodhi-sattva and dedicate one's mind to everlasting purity and brightness. These complete the purpose of the Buddha's Teachings.

The Sutra of Amitabha's Purity, Equality, and Understanding states, *'Wherever the Buddha's Teachings have been received, either in cities or countrysides, people would gain inconceivable benefits. The land and people would be enveloped in peace. The sun and the moon would shine*

clear and bright. Wind and rain would appear accordingly, and there will be no disasters. Nations would be prosperous and there will be no use for soldiers and weapons. People would abide by morality and accord with laws. They would be courteous and humble. Everyone would be content. There would be no injustices, thefts or violence. The strong would not dominate the weak and everyone will be settled at their proper place in the society.'

This passage of the Sutra clearly reveals the true benefits of Buddha's Teachings.

Mr. Kuang Shi Mei, one of the most famous Buddhist scholars in China stated, 'If we wish to propagate the Buddha's Teachings at this time and age, it is necessary to promote the Pure Land School. To promote Pure Land, we must bring forth The Sutra of Amitabha's Purity, Equality, and Understanding. If people would study

and put the teachings of this Sutra into practice, they will come to understand the reality of cause and effect. Naturally, the purity of their minds would bring about the health of their bodies, and their environment would be free from pollutions. Hence, this period of corruption would surely be overturned and peace will follow.'

Today's world is filled with extreme confusion, and everyone wishes to restore order. To prevent the disasters upcoming right before our eyes, we must diligently and tirelessly persuade people to bear a kind heart, perform kind deeds, speak kind words, and overall, be a decent person. We plan to achieve the above goals (The Four Decencies) through understanding the spirit behind different types of teachings (see Guidelines for Selection of Passages).

Members of the Pure Land Learning Center should without doubt follow the teachings of Purity, Equality, and Understanding and be determined to reach the Pure Land. I hope this new facility will be dedicated to the exclusive study and practice of the Pure Land Teachings in this great land of America.

We should follow the footsteps of Teacher Yin Guang and truly bring our ideals (specified in the Introduction of the Pure Land Learning Center) to life.

We should often provide discussions and hold study sessions where Buddha Recitation would be practiced. Buddha Recitation is the most effective way to purify our mind. In this way we would be cultivating according to what we learn.

The Buddha's Education is not an escape from worldly problems; instead, dedicated students of the Teachings under-

take the basic responsibilities of restoring order to the world, overcoming the problems in society and helping the distressed. Through inner peace, we can attain world peace.

Only by seeing through the same eyes of understanding is it possible for us to be truly diligent in our cultivation and spreading of the Buddha's Teachings. We reach towards happiness of the family, stability of the society, a respected nation, and a harmonious world apart from sufferings. I hope the everlasting light of the Buddha's Teachings will penetrate to all corners of the world as soon as possible.”

Presented by
The Elder Teacher Chin Kung
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U.S.A.

Guidelines for Selection of Passages

The way to world peace is through common viewpoint. To achieve common viewpoint, we plan to gather the spirit and ideas from different types teachings by selecting passages from historical volumous books of experience and wisdom. We hope those who are interested in participating in this task would abide by the following guidelines:

1. Select short, easily understood passages, instead of lengthy ones.
2. Select needed and practical teachings, and not fancy philosophies.
3. Select passages which would:
 - ◆ benefit one's own moral conduct and cultivation.
 - ◆ bring happiness into the family.
 - ◆ improve our job performance by relating to the past career experience of people from all walks of life.
 - ◆ promote stability of the society.
 - ◆ help the nation prosper.

- ◆ help bring about world peace.
 - ◆ close the gaps between different races, beliefs, and lines of studies.
4. After properly compiling and categorizing the passages into one volume, we should translate them into different languages for readership worldwide. Our ideal goal is to introduce the ancients' wisdom to the world and promote harmony.
 5. Select famous teachings from foreign literature. If these could be distributed worldwide, then we can establish common understanding, harmoni-

ous living, and shared prosperity. This would bring about a mutually supportive and happy world.